

**Central Funds to Orissa under Rural Area
Connectivity Programme**

386. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have provided any financial assistance to the State Government of Orissa to make the bridges in Kalahandi and Naupara districts under the rural area connectivity programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether the major bridges over river Sunder and the bridge over river Tel have also been taken up under the programme;

(d) if so, the names of other bridges which are under construction by the above fund; and

(e) the time by which the construction work of the bridges is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) :
(a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Electrification of Erode-Ernakulam Railway Line

387. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of the electrification of Erode-Ernakulam Railway line; and

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon so far?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) The work of electrification between Erode-Shoranur/Vallattolnagar of the Erode-Ernakulam railway line has already been completed in March'97, and the work on the remaining portion of the above line has been taken up.

(b) Rs. 99.36 Crores have been spent on this project upto March' 97.

**Contaminated Drinking Water in
Indo-Bangladesh Region**

388. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the worst arsenic contamination of drinking water in the Indo-Bangladesh region which is turing worse;

(b) if so, whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) has sounded an alarm to India ; and

(c) if so, the steps the Government are going to take on the recommendations of WHO on arsenic toxicity of water?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATARAMAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. However, the World Health Organisation (WHO) organised a Regional consultation at New Delhi from 29th April to 1st May, 1997 involving representatives from Government, Scientists, United Nations and other donor agencies to provide guidance and prepare action plans to tackle the problem.

(c) Steps have been taken for holding trainers workshop, field training for water quality analysis, development of arsenic testing kits, National level workshop, creation of mass awareness and district level training in West Bengal under the Government of India/WHO collaborative programme.

Besides these, the Ministry of Rural Affairs and Employment had reported that the Government of West Bengal has prepared a perspective plan of long and short term measures to tackle arsenic contamination at a cost of Rs.750 crores. Several research and development projects have been sanctioned by that Ministry under the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission.

The Central Ground Water Board has also undertaken surveys and a R & D project in some affected areas of West Bengal.

Corruption cases against Civil Servants

389. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of corruption, dishonesty and assets disproportionate to the income of civil servants investigated by the Vigilance Department of Ministry in 1995-96;

(b) the number of officers found involved therein, Grad-wise;

(c) the number of complaints received against corruption and dishonesty in 1995-96 and the action taken thereon;

(d) whether the Vigilance Department initiate action *suo-moto* against the staff suspected to be dishonest and corrupt;

(e) if so, whether any review of the functioning of powers of the vigilance section is proposed to be made; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) :

(a) 20 cases (8 old & 12 received during 1995-96).

(b) After preliminary investigations only one Group A officer was found involved and departmental proceedings have been initiated against him. Preliminary investigation in respect of two Group B Officers is under process.

(c) 12 cases received and got preliminary investigated departmentally. Complaints found not substantiated in 10 cases on preliminary investigation & hence closed. Complaint in one case closed due to death of the officer against whom received. Departmental proceedings initiated in one case.

(d) Normally action is initiated by Vigilance Section on complaints, but it can also initiate action if a malpractice or misconduct of its employees is noticed through its own system of intelligence.

(e) and (f) Functioning of the Vigilance Section in the Ministry has been reviewed recently and the Annual Action Plan for the year 1997-98 on vigilance and anti corruption measures drawn by Department of Personnel & Training has been adopted by the Ministry. The Action Plan broadly covers preventive vigilance; surveillance and detection and deterrent punitive action. Several steps have been initiated to strengthen the vigilance machinery in the Ministry as a follow up to the Action Plan, such as identification of sensitive posts and rotational posting thereon and identification of corruption prone areas etc.

Loss by Calcutta Metro Railways

390. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:
SHRI RUP CHAND PAL :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Calcutta Metro Railway has incurred a loss of Rs.18.64 crores during 1996-97 as against Rs.13.78 crores during 1995-96, while the number of passengers on the Metro has gone up during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

((c) the sale amount of passenger tickets turn-out in 1995-96 and 1996-97 in Calcutta Metro;

(d) the working expenses of Metro Railway during the same period category-wise; and

(e) the steps being taken to cut down loss in the Calcutta Metro ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Calcutta Metro has incurred a loss of Rs.19.77 crore in 1996-97 as against Rs.13.78 crore during 1995-96.

The losses have increased on account of increase in the fixed and the variable components of the cost of Metro operations as also increase in the number of train services.

(c) The revenue earnings on account of sale of tickets etc. is as under :

Year	No. of Passengers (in crores)	Earnings (in crore of Rs.)
1995-96	4.33	11.70
1996-97	6.26	17.42

(d) Working expenses are as under :

Year	(in crore of Rupees)					
	Gross working expenses	Appropriation to pension reserve fund	Net working expenses	Main categories of working expenses		
				Staff	Energy	Maintenance
1995-96	25.48	3.23	22.25	6.78	11.02	2.20
1996-97	37.19	4.15	33.04	10.92	14.96	3.01

(e) (i) The fare structure is proposed to be revised.

(ii) State Government has been approached for rationalisation of bus routes along Metro corridor to eliminate unhealthy competition and to optimise the utilisation of assets.

(iii) State Government has been requested to restore the concessional rate for electrical energy which was withdrawn since November, 1996.

(iv) To utilise the space available at Metro Stations and outside for advertisement and other commercial use.

Losses Suffered by Doordarshan

391. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the sponsors of news-based programmes "Aaj Tak" and "To Night" programme were liberally allowed Free Commercial Time (F.C.T.) during July 17, 1996 to October, 1996 and February, 1995 to September, 1996 respectively;

(b) if so, the losses suffered during the above period;

(c) whether the issue has been probed into and the defaulters brought to book ; and